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# CALLING WORKERS to FARMS AGAIN!

## Fact Sheet: 1947 FARM LABOR PROGRAM EXTENSION SERVICE, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### The May 1 Situation

Many thousands of seasonal jobs are open again on American farms. In every agricultural State, domestic workers (citizens like all of us) are being called to fill them.

There is need for all these extra workers, May through November, because demand for agricultural production is still at record levels, and because there is not enough family and hired workers on the farms to meet our food and fiber requirements and help overcome shortages in other lands.

**Production:** American farmers are asked to plant 357 million acres of crops, compared with 345 million acres planted in 1946. There is a great deal of emphasis on crops requiring large amounts of hand labor.

Agriculture Secretary Anderson says 1947 production goals call for "continued full production", because "here at home, consumers continue to demand farm products at about wartime levels. Overseas agriculture has not nearly recovered from the war, and import requirements there remain high. Actually, the world's food situation is only slightly better than a year ago".

**Labor Supply:** The 1947 general labor supply is expected to be about the 1943 level; somewhat better than the low point reached in late 1945, but still short of prewar. Current domestic Farm Labor supply is only a little stronger than it was a year ago. Demand for workers is about the same as it was in 1946.

As of May 1, 1947 the number of family and hired workers on farms was one percent larger than a year earlier. There has been an upward trend in domestic Farm Labor supply since early 1946, and it is likely to continue, but acceleration may not keep up to the speed registered last year.

**Wages:** Wage rates for hired farm workers reached new highs in 1946. In the country as a whole, on April 1, 1947, farm wages averaged 10 percent higher than a year earlier, but were below the July 1946 peak. Since 1914 farm wages have not increased proportionately as much as factory earnings, but since 1940 the rate of increase has been much faster in agriculture than in other industries.

**Industrial Competition:** Farm Labor supply in any area will be closely related to the nonagricultural situation in nearby areas. If industrial employment continues high with few disrupting factors, competition between nonagricultural and agricultural industries will be exceedingly keen, perhaps as keen as it was during war years.

#### Sources of Domestic Labor Supply

Among domestic workers it is believed that there can be obtained nearly enough, perhaps all the labor needed to bridge gaps in the farm work force, if the potential workers and the jobs can be brought together. Some prospective workers are now in unemployed ranks. In March 1947, there were 2,330,000 unemployed persons in the country, but many of them were located very far from areas of Farm Labor need, and many others were not physically able to do farm work, or were unwilling to do that kind of hard work. It is probable that two or two and a half million persons represents 'normal' unemployment in this country.

*What's ahead  
in Farm Labor?* The bulk of the needed labor supply will come from an increasing flow of those who followed the crops in prewar years; from ranks of men, women and youth who have free time during periods of peak Farm Labor need, and from people who want to supplement earnings from other employment, or who want to take advantage of unusual opportunities for earnings in short periods of farm employment. As an example, many women who worked in nonagricultural jobs during the war are now interested in seasonal farm jobs as a source of 'pin' money. There are opportunities for vacation, week-end and other short time work. There are jobs for those who want to live at home, on farms or in Farm Labor camps.

#### Face to Face With Big Job

The big job ahead in filling farm jobs with domestic workers--building a strong and reliable Farm Labor force--is that of bringing the jobs and the prospective workers together. This calls for the employment of aggressive information services in which newspaper, magazine, house organ, trade publication and radio facilities and all types of advertising techniques will be fully utilized in telling prospective workers where the jobs are, how to get there, when their help is needed, how long the work will last, and what conditions of living and employment surround the jobs.

Another prong in this service should be directed at farmers in acquainting them with sources of potential labor and in emphasizing the importance of

full utilization of all available domestic workers, and the offering of good living conditions as well as satisfactory wages. Farmers are making good progress in remedying conditions which have been hindrances to obtaining the kind of workers they want. Extension Farm Labor is working with them in facilitating continued progress.

#### Accent Is on Domestic Workers

Accent is on employment of domestic labor in farm work because these workers are preferred by farmers. Some foreign workers will be needed this year in sugar beets and other crops, but this force will be smaller than last year, and no prisoners of war will be available. Foreign workers will be utilized as a mobile force, and employed almost entirely in agricultural jobs requiring strong male workers, or involving repetitive tasks shunned by domestic workers during periods of high employment. None will be employed to displace domestic workers.

#### Kind of Work That Is to Be Done

The need for extra seasonal workers will vary widely between crops and between areas, States and communities. Likewise, the type of workers required will differ. In some jobs women and youth cannot be efficiently utilized because the work is too heavy.

Generally the heaviest volume of seasonal work will be in specialized fruit and vegetable, cotton, peanut, potato, hybrid corn and other similar areas. In most of these areas the peak labor need will be as heavy as during war years. In some it may be even heavier. In general farming, dairy and poultry areas there is need for seasonal workers for harvest jobs, as well as men for year-round work. These year-round jobs are becoming more attractive as farmers continue to improve housing.

#### Emergencies in Recruiting Workers

Emergencies in production and harvesting will develop in many crops and in most States, and there will be continuing need for strong public appeals and local mobilization of workers to save the crops. In these appeals emphasis can be applied to the

1. economic strength that comes to a community when maximum crops are produced and harvested. Crop losses destroy the balance.



2. opportunities for earnings on part or full time basis in seasonal work, or in year-round work.
3. educational, work experience and health building opportunities city and town youth have in farm work. (VFW program)

#### Information Support in Recruiting

Information support for Extension's Farm Labor program will flow from Extension offices: agricultural and Farm Labor offices in the counties, State Farm Labor and other Extension offices in the States and from the federal Extension Farm Labor office in Washington. The bulk of this 'sparking' will be done at the State and county levels, with the federal office facilitating these operations.



There will be no national networks radio programs and no national advertising campaign, unless national emergencies develop. States have the responsibility of developing State, county and community services applying to their specific needs. They will welcome the continued cooperation of newspapers and other publications, radio, advertisers, advertising agencies and community organizations. Individuals or organizations desiring to cooperate can always obtain reliable and up-to-the minute information from these sources:

County and community level: County Extension Service and county Extension Farm Labor offices.

State level: State Extension Farm Labor supervisor and Extension editor offices at State Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (See complete listing on pages 7 and 8).

National level: Extension Farm Labor office, 6405 South Bldg., U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C., Telephone: Republic 4142, Extension 4984.

#### Information for Those Who Want Farm Jobs

Those who have a summer for farm work should consult the county Extension Service or county Extension Farm Labor offices. These usually are located at the county seat. Where there are no Extension offices, public employment offices generally have information that will be helpful.

Those who have less than an entire summer or season, or only part-time to devote to farm work, should await local calls for workers in their towns, cities and counties. These calls will come via newspapers, radio or other communicating devices.



Those who are seeking year-round farm employment, whether experienced or inexperienced in farm work, should consult the county Extension Service office or the county Extension Farm Labor office.

All of this seasonal and year-round work carries prevailing weekly or monthly wages or piecework rates. These vary between crops and communities.

### Available Information Materials

At the county Extension Service and county Extension Farm Labor offices, and at the State Extension Farm Labor offices, locally developed materials and services supporting the Farm Labor program are freely available to all who are interested. To supplement this, the federal Extension Farm Labor office has produced materials and services, which are available through the State Extension Farm Labor offices or at the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. These include:

#### General Materials

"Help Needed", 2-color, 18 by 26 general recruiting poster and 11 by 17 placard.

"Farm Labor Office" directional signs, 2-color, cardboard, right and left arrows.

"Great Plains States Combine and Labor Guide for Wheat and Small Grain Harvest", 20-pages, 10 States, Texas to Canada.

"Farm Jobs from Gulf to Great Lakes", central States harvest guide, 32-pages, 14 States, Alabama to Minnesota.

"Farm Jobs Along Western Highways", western harvest guide, 20-pages, 8 States, Arizona to Washington.

"Trabajos de Agricultura a lo largo de las Carreteras Occidentales", Spanish text edition of western guide listed immediately above.

East Coast Harvest Guide, 12 States, Florida to Connecticut, available after July 1.

Newspaper mats, publicizing guides, separate 4-column lay-out for each guide. Basic Fact Sheet, this publication; one page revisions about 15th of July, August, September and October.

"Certificate of National Service", red and blue on white, recognition award; supply from last year.



"Some Pickin'", motion picture, 16 mm. black and white, available at film depositories at Land-Grant colleges in cotton States; 35 mm, print available at federal Extension Farm Labor office, 6405 South Bldg., USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

#### Victory Farm Volunteers (Youth) Materials

"Want a Farm Job?", 4-color, 18 by 26 recruiting poster.

"Our School Will Help You Find a Farm Job", 2-color, 9 by 11 recruiting poster.

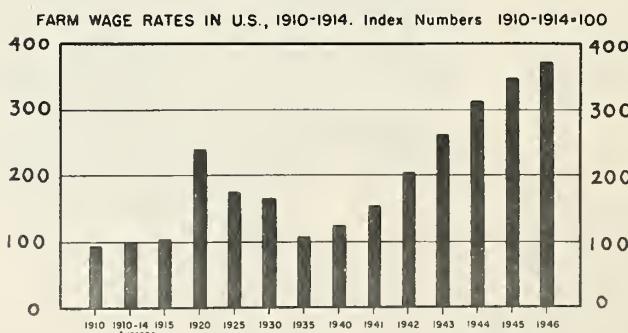
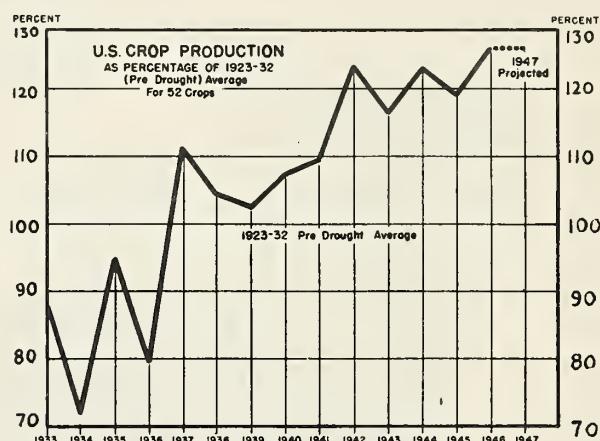
"Want a Farm Job?", 6-page folder addressed to town and city youth.

"Youth Can Help", 4-page folder addressed to farmers.

"Farm Work for City Youth", 28-page booklet emphasizing importance of farm work opportunities for city and town youth as educational factor.

Membership-Referral card, supply from last year.

"Your Job as a Work Leader" bulletin, supply from last year.



*Please* keep this folder for reference throughout the 1947 season because the data contained will not be repeated in revisions. These will be limited to changes in situations, and additional materials and services.

*Thank You*

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